

FIFTY-NINTH REPORT

OF THE

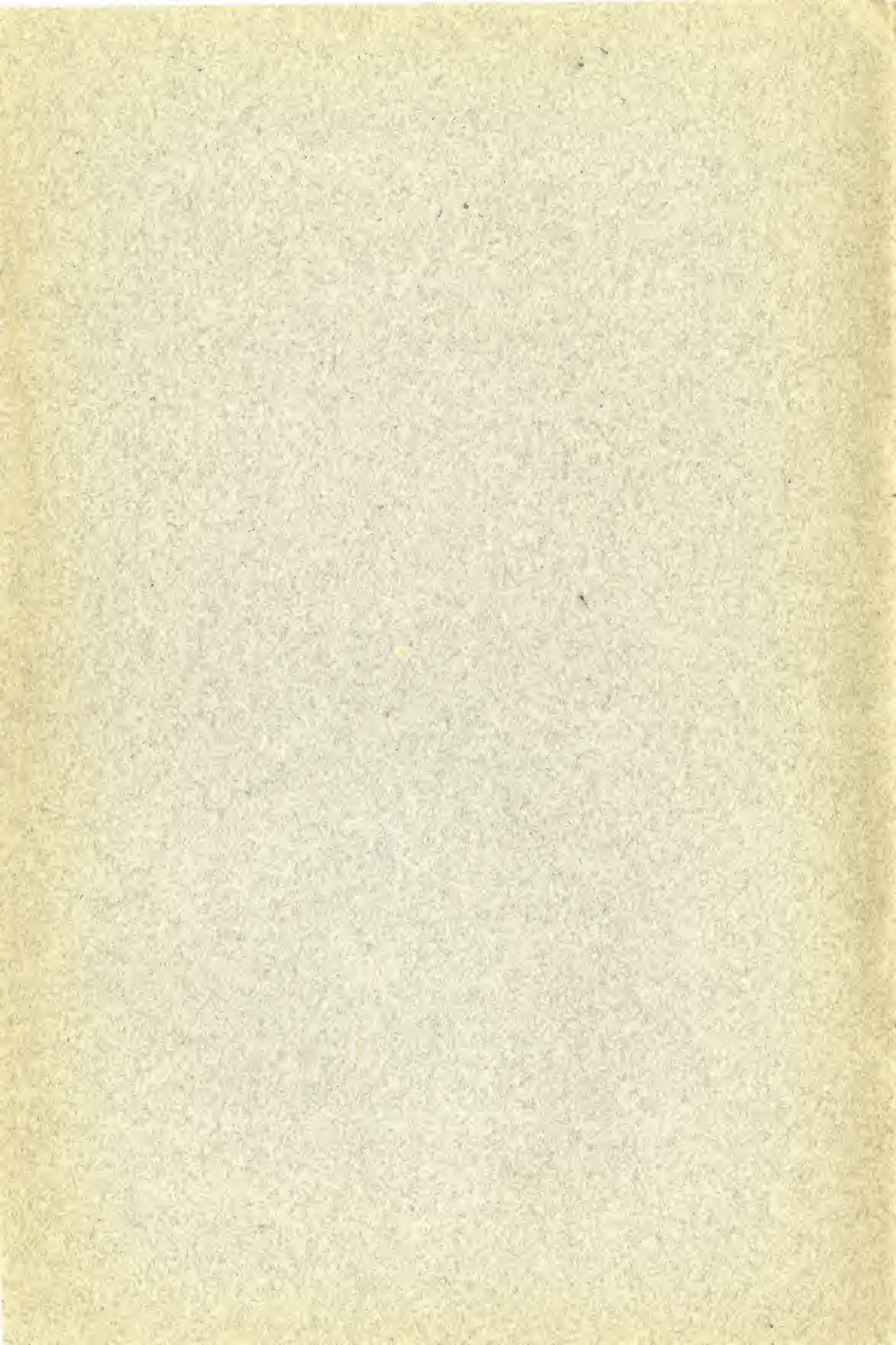
Ministry-at-Large

IN LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS



FROM MAY, 1903, TO DECEMBER, 1904,
INCLUSIVE





TO THE FRIENDS OF THE MINISTRY-AT-LARGE:—

As President of the Board of Managers I hereby announce the enlargement of the Board.

While the funds are to be distributed, as heretofore, in a purely non-sectarian manner, the Board itself, also, as may be seen by a reference to the list of Directors, is now non-sectarian in its composition, and is representative of the interests of the entire city.

The report of the work follows.

GEORGE F. RICHARDSON,
President.

Lowell, April 19, 1905.



FIFTY-NINTH REPORT

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MINISTRY-AT-LARGE

IN LOWELL, MASS.

FROM MAY, 1903, TO DECEMBER, 1904, INCLUSIVE

LOWELL, MASS.
COURIER-CITIZEN COMPANY, PRINTERS
1905

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT.

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THOMAS NESMITH, *Vice-President.*

HAMILTON BURRAGE, *Secretary.*

GEORGE R. CHANDLER, *Treasurer.*

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JACOB ROGERS
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C. T. BILLINGS,
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MISS N. P. H. ROBBINS.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

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GEORGE R. CHANDLER.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

REV. C. T. BILLINGS, AMASA PRATT, MISS N. P. H. ROBBINS,
GEORGE C. WRIGHT, *Minister-at-Large.*

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TO THE CITIZENS OF LOWELL:—

The Ministry-at-Large does anything and everything that may be necessary for the temporary relief of the distressed families of the small wage-earners of the city, without regard to religion, nationality or color.

No needy family appeals in vain to the Ministry-at-Large, but it does not assume the care of those who, without shame, are ready to accept the provisions which the city or State make for paupers, in almshouses and out-door relief, and which deprives the recipients of certain desirable political privileges.

Small-wage people are quite above the class of paupers. They have a hard struggle always to make ends meet, and may know distressing want when, in seasons of depression in business, in severe weather, or lack of employment, or with sickness in the family, they are reduced to the last extremity. They are usually self-supporting, and reluctantly accept aid when compelled to. They will not beg or willingly expose their circumstances, but their distressing want brings them to our office, and here they receive, without publicity, the temporary relief and friendly counsel that bridges them over their peril and despair.

These small-wage people we know better than any other city institution. Know them better, perhaps, than they know themselves. They know us, and in their times of distress they look to us for needed aid and friendly counsel. In this way this Ministry-at-Large has been for fifty-nine years past their most valued friend and reliance. Among them are men of families, widows and deserted wives with families of small children, invalid single men and women who are not hospital cases.

Indiscriminate giving to beggars and vagabonds is wrong, but, in cases of distress of honest poverty, timely help and friendly counsel to those who cannot help themselves is both right and politic. By this means families are saved from becoming bankrupt in body and soul, and a menace to the community.

We investigate all applicants, and help only the deserving ones, and in full measure to meet their immediate needs. Any applicant showing a disposition to "lie down on us," is warned or discontinued. Cases of attempted fraud expose themselves.

Our timely aid and friendly counsel lifts the suffering family out of its temporary distress. It keeps the family together, enables it to preserve its self-respect, and to continue its best efforts for self-support.

Since the last report the Ministry-at-Large has spent \$2,847.27 for the supplies distributed in charitable relief. This money came from the Thomas Nesmith Fund, the Jonathan Tyler Fund, the J. C. Dalton Fund, the N. M. Wright Fund, and the Harriet R. Nesmith Maternity Fund. These supplies were of groceries, coal, wood, shoes, clothing, board, meals, lodging, milk, rent, railroad fares, hospital treatment, and funeral expenses. In addition has been distributed second-hand clothing and furniture contributed for the purpose.

The number of persons benefited by this distribution of supplies was, according to nationality, as follows:—

English	750
Americans	498
Irish	517
Scotch	476
British Canadian	235
French Canadian	216
Other nationalities	108
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	2800

According to church preferences:—

Protestants	2041
Roman Catholics	759

The endorsement of an applicant for relief by minister, priest, or reputable citizen, is sufficient guarantee till our own investigation is made.

Besides this material relief distributed during the year, counsel was given, and letters of information written to other charitable institutions, agents and churches, in 337 cases.

The Minister-at-Large has served the State Board of Charity during the year as Lowell probation visitor of the intemperates released from the State Farm at Bridgewater on indeterminate sentences. He has served the State Hospital at Foxborough in a like capacity.

The Ministry-at-Large offices are used by the "Country Week" Committee during July and August, in sending needy families into the country for a week or two of rest and change.

The legal services of several well-known lawyers are given on request, and without cost, in cases that come to the Ministry-at-Large for advice and help. Also, the medical services of several well-known doctors. It is not possible to estimate the extent and value of such services, and all that can be said here is to note the free generosity of these lawyers and doctors and their efficient services.

The Boston and Northern Railway Co. gave us 500 free-ride tickets to distribute to needy women and children during July and August.

During the spring a strike occurred in seven of the mills here. About 18,000 operatives were out of work for several weeks because of it. About 15,000 of these operatives had no claim on the labor unions for relief, and some of them were compelled to ask relief of the Ministry-at-Large. The strike was ill-advised, and it dissolved when the mill officials finally decided to resume operations and open the mill gates again.

Rev. Christopher Ruess, graduate of Harvard University and Harvard Divinity School, has been ordained in the Free Church of the Ministry-at-Large. Rev. Prof. W. W. Fenn and Rev. Edward Hale, of Harvard University, Rev. Edward S. Horton, of Boston, and Rev. C. E. Fisher, of Lowell, took part in the ordination service. The Minister-at-Large preached the ordination sermon. Mr. Ruess came to his decision to do social service ministry because of what he saw done here. He went to San Francisco immediately after his ordination, to do an important social service ministry there.

The explosion disaster in the Wigginvillle district of the adjoining town of Tewksbury will be remembered. The district was populated by small-wage people working in the Lowell mills, who had built their homes too near the powder magazines which had been located there years ago, when the district was a wilderness. The explosion of these magazines caused personal injuries to many, loss of life, and destruction of property. The people there and in Lowell were panic stricken.

The citizens of Lowell were invited by the Courier-Citizen newspaper to contribute for the relief of the sufferers. They responded generously in household furnishings, clothing, and over \$15,000 of money. A committee was appointed, with Mayor Charles E. Howe as chairman, to take charge of these contributions. The committee asked the Ministry-at-Large for the use of its building, to receive contributions and distribute relief, and use of the building was given it. The Mayor asked the Minister-at-Large to distribute the relief. It was distressing and trying work to do. Mayor Howe and the committee were satisfied with the careful way the relief was distributed, and publicly stated that this careful distribution had saved \$8,000 of the relief fund. This \$8,000 was turned over to the Selectmen of Tewksbury for the benefit of the explosion sufferers, to meet their subsequent needs of the winter.

The first Massachusetts State Conference of Charities was held in Boston. The Minister-at-Large was invited to speak there on the subject of "Widows." His particular part of the subject was to show that in helping the widow to guide and guard the moral life of her children the highest service is rendered to her and them and the community.

The small-wage man of family, who comes to the Ministry-at-Large in his trouble for household necessities, needs something more than these. He needs be assured also of the right spirit of life, and the point of view which makes the common lot of living and working and reproducing to abound in little daily opportunities of service and happiness, and to be consistent with large manhood and spiritual expression. He knows enough of the social panaceas of vague humanitarians to distrust them, and to avoid also the random activities designed to attract him towards spiritual interests. The great social emancipatory law was written by a Jew named Paul, in the thirteenth chapter of one of his letters to friends at Corinth. This great law is most beneficially and convincingly taught by the teacher, or preacher, or parent, who illustrates it by his intelligent sympathy and personal life. It then is made clear to the common understanding. This is the gospel and social panacea of the Free Church of the Ministry-at-Large. There is a church service and

a children's service on Sunday, with classes on Sunday and other days of the week, according to need and opportunity. The seats and services are without price to those who worship here. The congregations are composed of small-wage fathers and mothers and their children. A large number of such families have their church attachment here. Their attendance is naturally less regular than that of families with better home and dress and work and health conditions. As their social condition improves, some of these families turn to other churches, but new families take their places with us. The spirit of the relief and the worship of the Ministry-at-Large is fuller life of body and freer life of soul for those who come within its ministrations. The supplying of bodily needs by the Ministry-at-Large is done by methods which the experts of charity approve. In our church service we try to bring the worshipper's spirit into communion with God by the simple congregational form of service. Such worship aspires to the self-reliance, forethought, deliberate choice, and faithfulness of those who walk their way with God, and these traits of character have made the supremely strong Puritan type of manhood.

GEORGE C. WRIGHT,
Minister-at-Large.

LOWELL, December 31, 1904.

FORM OF BEQUEST

I give, devise and bequeath unto the MINISTRY-AT-LARGE
in Lowell, Massachusetts, the sum of.....Dollars.

